

Minutes of the Regular Meeting  
**PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION**  
Wednesday, February 5, 2003  
Mountain View Park Community Center  
8625 E. Mountain View Rd.

Present: Chairperson Shelley Anderson, Vice-Chair Leigh Hersey, Commissioners David Fortney, Bill Heckman, Nona Oliver, and Stephen Owens

Absent: Commissioner Lynn Timmons Edwards

Staff Present: Debra Baird, Steve Arnold, Tara Dittmer, Terry Erickson, Scott Hamilton, Christy Hill, , Jeanne Jones, Gary Meyer, Bill Murphy, Erin McKallor-Quill, Don Penfield, Pete Riley, Chuck Skidmore, Judy Weiss, and Rose Williams,

#### CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Anderson called the meeting to order at 5 p.m.

#### MOMENT OF SILENCE

Chairperson Anderson asked everyone to observe a moment of silence

#### APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Commissioner Heckman moved the minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 15, 2003 be approved as submitted. Commissioner Owens seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

#### DIRECTOR'S REPORT OF CURRENT EVENTS (A.R.S. § 38-431.02(K))

Debra Baird, Parks, Recreation & Facilities Director, updated the Commission on the status of events and activities of the Parks, Recreation, & Facilities Division. The Grand Opening for Sonoran Hills Park will be Saturday, February 8, 2003 at 11 am. Upcoming Co-sponsored events include the Happy Tails Fundraiser on February 22<sup>nd</sup>, the Run, Walk or Skate for Youth & Families on March 22<sup>nd</sup>, and the Champion for Children 5K on March 30<sup>th</sup>. Exclusively Little will be held at McCormick Stillman Railroad Park on Saturday, March 1<sup>st</sup> from 11-2. This is a free fun event for children 6 and under. The Leisure Lifestyles brochure will begin distribution on February 11<sup>th</sup>. Registration for residents will begin on March 5<sup>th</sup> for Leisure Education classes. The annual Celebrity Baseball Game will be held on Sunday, February 9<sup>th</sup> at 1 p.m. at the Scottsdale Stadium. The Grand Opening for the Desert Garden will be Saturday, February 22<sup>nd</sup> from 11-1.

#### COMMUNITY SERVICES BUDGET UPDATE AND FINANCIAL PLANNING

Bill Exham, General Manager of Community Services, provided the Commission with PowerPoint review of the City of Scottsdale Budget process and the challenges and issues that face the city in planning for the upcoming fiscal year. It is estimated there will be a \$7 mil shortfall for the current year. Mr. Exham outlined where revenues come from and the distribution of the budgeted amounts by department. He then detailed the Community Services budget that includes Parks, Recreation and Facilities, Human Services and the Library, and the Scottsdale Cultural Council. He outlined the measures that are being taken to make cutbacks for the current year and the plans for cutbacks in the upcoming budget process for the next fiscal year. Don Penfield, Community Services Advisor, reviewed the Capital projects and how they could potentially be affected by the budget shortfalls.

Commissioner Heckman asked where Westworld is in the budget. Mr. Exham said it is separate from Community Services and had a budget of its own. Ms. Baird noted that staff does provide them with some basic level of service needs for the facilities. Jeanne Jones, Community Services Advisor noted

that in the original pie chart all city departments were shown including Westworld. Mr. Exham said Community Services is not responsible for the operation to Westworld.

Commissioner Oliver asked what kinds of dollars are put into maintenance of Westworld. Mr. Exham said it is for such things as heating repairs, electricians, plumbers and other basic service needs and there is a budget for this. Commissioner Oliver asks who pays for police when they go to Westworld or other special events. Mr. Exham said there is an account set up for special events that require traffic and parking control and you have to apply to use the fund. Commissioner Oliver feels that the people running the shows should pay for the policeman. Mr. Exham said the City realizes an economic impact from these events and that is the deciding factor for using these funds. Commissioner Oliver asked if there is a volunteer program for youth at the Libraries. Mr. Exham said there is and it is a good program with several hundred volunteers. The City relies on volunteers heavily. The libraries distribute 1.8 million pieces of material a year.

Commissioner Heckman asked if Community Services is being asked to trim about \$1.3 million from the prior approved budget. Mr. Exham said, from the current year, staff has been able to reduce expenditures by about \$1.3 million. Commissioner Heckman noted that this was the immediate action and asked if it will dramatically affecting programs or facilities. Mr. Exham said in the next phase of reductions, staff may have to do some other things. There are many unfilled positions of which some will be eliminated. That means that the City won't have to get into discussions about layoffs. Commissioner Heckman asked if staff has been given a number yet to reduce for the future. Mr. Exham said staff won't know as the projected deficit is based on projected expenditures. Staff will take a look at what are the most important things and evaluate for reductions. Commissioner Heckman asked if this will push back capital expenditures. Mr. Exham said if the project has a high new operational and maintenance cost it could be delayed. Commissioner Heckman said he understood that all departmental budgets in Scottsdale have a 10% contingency fund and would this be an appropriate time to tap into these funds. Mr. Exham said bond money can only be used for the designated project. There is no contingency fund in departmental operating budgets.

Chairperson Anderson said the City should look at a 5-year plan and should also look at its reliance on sales taxes. Is raising fees is a possibility to have facilities pay for themselves. Mr. Exham said it has been studied and every year we do have a 5-year plan. As an example the Stack 40 project is anticipated to generate new spending in the city. No one wants to raise property taxes. Staff is looking at development fees, fees and charges, and charges for programs. The people that are least able to afford the fees rely on city services will be impacted the most. If services paid for themselves the city wouldn't do them and would allow the private sector to do them. The city wants to support things that have an impact on families. Increases will significantly impact thousands of people. We are trying to balance everything and still provide the things that are good for the community. Chairperson Anderson said parents can pay for field trips and sometimes get a tax-deductible credit. Mr. Exham said staff is looking at these things as a part of the fees and charges schedule.

Commissioner Heckman noted that Scottsdale is in the worst pickle than they have been in for the past 50 years. There is competition from other communities, tourism is down, and development is slowing. We are looking at a 3 to 5 year problem where revenues will not be what we have become accustomed to. We must have our eyes open as we are looking at these things. It is better to eliminate a capital project rather than impact programs heavily. Mr. Exham agreed and said we are looking at every capital improvement project. Commissioner Heckman said making the decision between the facilities will be difficult. Mr. Exham noted that balance will be the issue.

#### INFORMATIONAL UPDATE ON THE CHAPARRAL PARK EXPANSION

Gary Meyer, Parks/Trails Planning Manager, discussed an updated master plan for the extension of Chaparral Park. Minor changes have been made to the plan since the Commission approval on March 20, 2002. Margaret Bruning, Associate Curator of Public Art at the Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art, addressed the public art component of the project.

Commissioner Oliver commented that there is a problem with the ADA parking at the main parking lot that needs to be addressed. Mr. Meyer said there was a problem with cut-through traffic along Jackrabbit so the parking lot was divided. Rose Williams, Service Manager, said there have been issues with the neighbors in the area regarding cars coming through there. Ms. Baird indicated the road was never meant to go through as it would divide the park and the traffic would be a hazard. Chairperson Anderson noted that this was an issue separate from the one being discussed and suggested Commissioner Oliver contact staff directly to try to affect a resolution.

Commissioner Heckman wondered if through the realignment of the sight are the ballfields closer to the residents' homes. Mr. Meyer said they have been moved a little closer but the radii has been shortened in the outfields. It is a minimum of 150 ft from the nearest home. Commissioner Heckman said the northern field could have foul ball implications on the Off Leash Area. Mr. Meyer said that is being addressed a couple of ways through programming. Commissioner Heckman asked why the Xeriscape Garden was moved to the south side of McDonald Road. Mr. Meyer said there were concerns from the adjacent neighbors about traffic in their area. Commissioner Heckman asked if the north corner will be improved. Mr. Meyer said staff is looking at that but we are at the mercy of the budget.

Vice-chair Hersey asked if you can walk between the ballfields to get to the Xeriscape Garden. Mr. Meyer said there is a pathway to the garden that is between the ballfields.

Commissioner Fortney asked if the north corner will basically stay as it is now. Mr. Meyer said staff is looking at upgrading it but doesn't know to what extent due to the budget constraints. It can be revisited in the future.

Chairperson Anderson asked will the water treatment facility have an odor and will there be plenty of handicap spaces provided. Mr. Meyer said the water treatment facility will not have an odor as it is contained. It is a fresh water treatment facility not a wastewater plant and it will be very secure. There will be handicap parking located closest to the facilities and will meet at least the minimum the city code as relates to accessibility. Ms. Baird said staff can have the ADA committee evaluate the parking.

Commissioner Heckman asked if access will be lost to the Off Leash activity area during construction. Mr. Meyer said the area will be moved south of the current site and remain open during construction.

Commissioner Fortney asked, by moving the Xeriscape, does that change the maintenance costs. Mr. Meyer said the Water Department will help with the funding of maintenance for the Xeriscape Garden. Ms. Williams said the ballfield maintenance will be a part of the operating costs and the Xeriscape will not impact that. Ms. Baird noted this capital project is in the top 4 projects with high operational impacts.

#### UPDATE ON MCDOWELL MOUNTAIN RANCH PARK/AQUATICS CENTER

Judy Weiss, Manager, provided an update on the McDowell Mountain Ranch Park/Aquatics Center project. The Parks & Recreation Commission approved the Master Site Plan, as did the Planning Commission. There was a desire on the part of several council members at the January 6, 2003 meeting to make sure the alternate sites were studied as well as possible in order for them to make an informed decision. The City Manager directed a study be done on Site L that would include a traffic study. The City Council will hear this issue on March 17, 2003.

Commissioner Oliver noted she has spoken with Councilwoman Lukas and e-mails should be sent to her if you are in favor of the project at the original location. Commissioner Oliver feels that Councilwoman Lukas will listen to the voters and everyone should advise her of their feelings.

Commissioner Heckman said he wanted to clarify the difference in between the Site L and the original site at McDowell Mountain Ranch. What amenities won't fit on Site L that were include in the original site. Ms. Weiss said all that is planned for the final phase of McDowell Mountain Ranch site is the fitness center, skate park, picnic area, and aquatics center. These same amenities could fit on Site L. No

preliminary design has been done but these amenities would probably take up most of the site. Commissioner Heckman asked if the playground area would still be built at McDowell Mountain Ranch or would it be left as open space. Ms. Weiss said the City Council would make that decision. There is no contingency plan and the public process would have to start again. Commissioner Heckman stated he believes all sites have been fairly examined and the original site selected is the correct site. The Council is well intended in directing staff to looking at alternate sites. With Site L there would be a time delay and is next to a power corridor. Doing this to appease a group of residents to have the desire to protect their development at the expense of the entire community is wrong. Commissioner Heckman is confident that the Council will see the wisdom of the original site. It is unfortunate it was postponed. He asked that this item be placed on the agenda so the Commission's displeasure can be recorded in the minutes.

Commissioner Owens said he is unclear as to the process now. Will the Council hear it then make the final decision. Ms. Weiss said that was correct. The Council can choose Option A or B, stick with the original approved Master Plan from 1995. They can select this site; any other site. If the Council chooses another site it will have to go through the entire process from the beginning.

Commissioner Fortney asked how much restarting the process would cost. Ms. Weiss said it is very hard to say. The design process to date is at about \$180,000 for the master plan. Commissioner Fortney asked how much staff time in real dollars has been spent. Ms. Weiss said the accounting has not been done on that. There have been 30 various meetings that staff has been involved in to date. Commissioner Fortney asked if \$250,000 is a conservative estimate for a total. Ms. Weiss said she does not know exactly how to respond to that, as we just don't know. Commissioner Fortney said to start over would cost at least \$180,000 in design fees.

Chairperson Anderson asked the City Council has discussed what dollars have already been spent on this project. Ms. Weiss said she believes they are aware. Chairperson Anderson said the general feeling is that the original choice was a good one and the Commission would like to stand strongly behind their original decision.

#### OPEN CALL TO THE PUBLIC (A.R.S. § 38-431.02)

Chairperson Anderson asked if there were any items from the floor. There were none. Chairperson Anderson asked if any Commissioner had any items for future discussion.

#### ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Heckman moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Fortney seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

With no further business to be brought before the Commission, Chairperson Anderson adjourned the meeting at 7:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Ruth Johnson, Recording Secretary.

Meets established criteria.



Debra Baird, Director  
Parks, Recreation & Facilities